

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 22, 2022

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Kauffman, Vice Chairman Andrus, Representatives Boyle, Kerby, Giddings, Marshall, Nichols, Hanks, Cannon, Moon, McCann, Toone, Ruchti, Mathias

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Kauffman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Mathias** made a motion to approve the minutes of March 10 and March 14, 2022. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

MOTION: **Rep. Cannon** made a motion to approve the minutes of March 16, 2022. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

S 1380: **Senator Stennett** explained the "Rural Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program" under the Idaho Department of Agriculture. The fund for the program would pay education debts for qualified veterinarians providing care for agricultural production animals in rural areas. Eligible applicants would receive up to \$25,000 a year for three years with a commitment to work four years in Idaho. If a recipient fails to abide by the contract, the grant award amount of the last year would be paid back to the department. Any candidate already receiving another loan repayment award is excluded from this program. Agricultural industry contributions, private donations, and federal funds can be added to the fund. A five member advisory committee in the department would be established to monitor and conduct the grant process. The Rural Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program would provide up to \$25,000 per year for ten applicants, or an allocation of \$250,000 per year, ongoing. The fund would be administered by the Idaho Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Scott Leibsle, Administrator, Division of Animal Industries, ISDA, introduced himself to the Committee. Dr. Leibsle presented data on the cost to attend veterinary school, the number, age, and location of Idaho large animal veterinarians, and vaccination statistics. Dr. Leibsle advised brucellosis is a bacteria which causes female cattle to abort their pregnancies. He said 60 percent of the Yellowstone National Park bison and elk herds were infected with brucellosis. Idaho cattle are required to be vaccinated against brucellosis because domestic cattle mix with infected wildlife, and only a vet can administer a vaccination. Dr. Leibsle said only a small number of Idaho veterinarians worked with large animals, and this bill would attract veterinarians to Idaho to practice large animal medicine.

Senator Harris said veterinarians are important to Idaho and are the front-line to food safety. He further explained veterinarians have to be available twenty four hours a day, carry vaccines, and provide consults.

Bob Naerebout, Idaho Cattlemen's Association, spoke **in support of S 1380**, and noted Idaho's shortage of large animal veterinarians is a continual problem.

MOTION: **Rep. McCann** made a motion to send **S 1380** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Due to time constraints, **S 1380** will be carried over to the meeting of March 23, 2022, upon adjournment.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Representative Kauffman
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary